6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard

685 Sanctions invoked to enforce property conceptions failed to be made explicit by informants. Probably they included the application of individual force, expressed verbally or physically, with the consent of the community. That is to say, if a man could not claim that to which he felt a right he might seize the goods and in the process perhaps inflict punishment on his rival. Property offenses also earned offenders an unfavorable public opinion. No force was used to compel a person to share meat but "We had a cache too. We could do the same thing. We won't give him much." Reciprocity therefore constituted one device serving to maintain the pattern of food sharing.

681 The aboriginal community found itself compelled to deal with lying, assault, manslaughter, infanticide, murder, cannibalism, sorcery, incest, unwed motherhood,
[577] adultery, and treason. A common form of lying consisted of a person returning from a hunt and telling exaggerated stories of the amount of game that he had seen. Not many such accounts were needed before the liar found himself regularly disbelieved. Against slander a quick tempered man reacted by killing his calumniator. Injuries inflicted due
• [672] to assault were settled by payment, a distinction apparently being made between wounds deliberately inflicted and those resulting accidentally. At least, no payment followed in the case of hurts secured from children's play. Likewise the people distinguished manslaughter from murder. In event of the former no vengeance followed but a payment, considerably lower than that obtaining in the case of murder, was expected. An Indian who committed manslaughter might be adopted in place of the deceased.[*]

847 People would drive out of the community a woman whose neglect caused her child to starve. "Let her starve," the people said in the hope that other people would thereby learn the necessity of treating each other more kindly. Infanticide of either a girl or boy infant merited severe scolding. The temptation to kill a baby appears to have been limited to cases where offspring resulted from incestuous unions. Such a child was sometimes killed in the birth camp, the mother stuffing its mouth with moss. The informant recalled no instance of abortion but he thought the deed would have been classified as murder.

682 Murder might be settled through a large payment, made in installments running over a year or more, or by blood revenge. Wergeld required the cooperation of all the members of the murderer's family. Vengeance constituted the duty of the victim's brother or uncle (father's brother?) and was never undertaken by a father. Retaliatory action always went against the actual killer and not against members of his family.[*] It is not

[*] Among the Tlingit "any crime may be paid for on a money basis." (Jones, *Study of the Tlingits of Alaska* [1914], 193.) Wergeld is stated to follow in restitution for murder and manslaughter among certain Athapascan tribes, the Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit Chilkat. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 320.

[163] [*] "The original Indians claiming the country of the Upper Pelly and its tributaries from [illegible] disappeared with the exception of one old woman. . . . The main reason for this is quarrelling amongst themselves. . . . generally started by two men fighting and one killing the other, when the relations and friends would take the quarrel up and kill the first man or some of his relations to get even and so they would keep the quarrel going until one party were all dead or so weakened that for a time they were satisfied to stop. Secondly, by stronger tribes making raids on them and killing the men and taking their women away with them. . . ." Field, *Unpublished manuscript* (1918), 1.